

# CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN OF MCHENRY COUNTY

## **Introduction**

The Citizen Participation Plan sets forth the county's policies and procedures for public involvement in the McHenry County consolidated planning process. The McHenry County Planning and Development, Community Development Division is responsible for the development and implementation of the Consolidated Plan. The Citizen Participation Plan contains the required elements listed in the Consolidated Plan regulations in accordance with Section 104(a) of the Housing and Community development Act of 1974 as amended and 24 CFR 91.105(b). The purpose of the Citizen Participation Plan is to extend and strengthen partnerships among all levels of government and the private sector, including for-profit and non-profit organizations, in the production and operation of: decent housing, suitable living environments, and expanded economic opportunities.

## **Definitions**

**Five-Year Consolidated Plan:** this is a document submitted to HUD every five years and serves as the five-year planning document of the County.

**Annual Action Plan:** this document is submitted to HUD every year and updates the Consolidated Plan and allocates one year's CDBG funding, including any program income generated from CDBG.

**Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER):** This document reports on the progress made in carrying out the Consolidated Plan and Action Plan.

**Substantial Amendments:** amendments to either the Five-Year Consolidated Plan or Annual Action Plans submitted to HUD that meet the HUD criteria as substantial as per 24 CFR Part 91.505. Amendments that are considered substantial include: changes in allocation priorities, changes in method of distribution of funds, the addition of activities to fund that have not been previously stated in the action plan, changes in the purpose of an activity, a twenty-five percent (25%) increase in an activity's originally approved budget, changes in scope, location or beneficiaries of an activity.

**Minor Amendments for Activities Stated in the Annual Action Plan:** amendment(s) to the budget of an activity, or activities, that increases the budget in an amount less than twenty-five percent (25%) of the activity's originally approved budget. A decrease from one project to increase another project requires that the McHenry County appointed officials hold public meetings for recommendation to, and approval by, the McHenry County Board via amendment to the resolution authorizing the original award, but does not require thirty (30) days public notice.

Budget Amendments as Part of the Annual Action Plan: budget balances de-obligated from cancelled activities or activities that have been successfully completed under-budget can be rolled forward into the next Annual Action Plan and CDBG funding round. Because Citizen Participation for a Substantial Amendment follows the same requirement as the proposed Annual Action Plan, no additional public participation is needed for this type of amendment.

Emergency Amendments: in the event of a natural disaster or catastrophic occurrence, McHenry County may determine the need to make a Substantial Amendment to the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan to address the unforeseen needs of the community. The County may request and obtain from HUD a complete waiver or reduction in days of the required thirty (30) days public notice period for Substantial Amendments. Emergency amendments require McHenry County appointed officials hold public meetings for recommendation to, and approval by, the McHenry County Board via resolution authorizing such amendments, but does not require thirty (30) days public notice.

Public Hearing: A Public Hearing is a public meeting that has been publicly noticed in local newspapers of general circulation or notice that follow procedures for formal noticing of public hearings. Public Hearings are required prior to the adoption of the Consolidated Plan, Action Plan, and Substantial Amendments either to plan or prior to the submission of the CAPER.

### **Notice to the Public**

A minimum of thirty (30) days notice for Public Notice shall be provided whenever a federally required document is available for public notice such as the Proposed Annual Action Plan, The Five-Year Consolidated Plan, and any proposed substantial Amendments is available for public review. A minimum of fifteen (15) days notice for Public Notice shall be provided whenever the CAPER document is available for public review.

In addition, there will be a minimum of thirty (30) days advance public notice of all public hearings and all public meetings such as the CDBG committee meeting and the McHenry County Housing Commission including their sub-committees relating to the funding or planning process required by the Citizen Participation Plan.

Forms of Public Notice:

- All Public Notices and essential documents are made available on the McHenry County Website at <http://www.co.mchenry.il.us/county-government/departments-j-z/planning-development/divisions/community-development>
- Public notices are sent to the following media source:  
Northwest Herald (but may additionally be sent to other papers such as:  
Chicago Tribune, Pioneer Press, Woodstock Independent, Daily Herald, Reflejos)

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- McHenry County libraries
- Additionally, other media sources may be used from time to time such as:  
     Star 105.5 (radio station)  
     McHenry County Blog  
     Local agencies that provided services to low to moderate income (including minorities and individual with disabilities) households and individuals
- Any agency or individual requesting to be on an email list.

### **Citizen Participation Opportunities**

HUD regulations declare that the primary purpose of the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) is to improve communities by providing decent housing, a suitable living environment and growing economic opportunities principally for low and moderate income people. Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) grant funding has a primary purpose to create affordable housing.

The Citizen Participation Plan encourages participation by low and moderate income persons, particularly those living in slum or blight areas and in areas where CDBG and HOME funds are proposed. In addition, it encourages the participation of all its citizens, including minorities and non- English speaking persons, as well as persons with disabilities. In the development and implementation of the Consolidated Plan, it also encourages the participation of other members of the community such as private and non-profit groups and other government agencies, which have impact on the community development of the County. To provide full access under the Consolidated Plan for low to moderate income people, McHenry County, Division of Community Development, will undertake the following actions:

- Will provide public notice information through local newspaper(s) regarding public hearings; a minimum of two (2) public hearings will be held annually to obtain citizen's views
- Will provide public notice through agencies that provide services to low and moderately low income families regarding public hearings.

Because the amount of CDBG and HOME assistance is mostly based upon the severity of both poverty and substandard housing conditions, it is necessary that the public participation genuinely involve low and moderate income residents who experience these conditions. Genuine involvement by low to moderate income people is essential at all stages of the development.

Participation processes including:

- Identifying needs
- Setting priorities
- Providing input on funded programs
- Input on program implementation

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- Access to Public Hearing meetings at a location where public transportation is available

To ensure full access under the Consolidated Plan for non-English speaking persons, the Department of Planning and Development, Community Development Division will undertake the following actions:

- provide Public Notice information, to local agencies that serve low to moderate income non-English speaking persons
- provide Public Hearing meetings at a location where public transportation is available
- provide access to a web-based translation services or Spanish-speaking translation services through McHenry County Court Services when not in courtroom use with five (5) business days advanced notice

To ensure full access under the Consolidated Plan for persons with disabilities, the County of McHenry, Division for Community Development, will undertake the following actions:

- select Public Meeting places that are accessible for persons with physical disabilities
- provide Public Hearing information at agencies that serve individuals with disabilities
- provide Public Hearing meetings at a location where public transportation is available

### **Access to Materials**

Citizens, public agencies and other interested parties may review information and records related to the Consolidated Plan and other HUD documents. The County will provide public access to HUD programs under the Consolidated Plan including the following documents that the Division of Community Development will maintain on file:

- Federal Regulations for the CDBG, related issuances and provisions
- Consolidated plans, Action Plans, Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Reports.
- Information about the County's CDBG program
- Information about the County's Housing Commission
- The McHenry County Citizens Participation Plan
- HUD requirement information, including grant agreements, audit records, evaluation reports, approval letters, and related correspondence. Material availability is subject to Freedom of Information rules and timeframe.
- Public meeting records and informational meeting records with neighborhood and civic groups and related notifications pertaining to programs under the Consolidated Plan.

To allow time for record retrieval and arrange space for review, the Community Development Division requires a three (3) day advance written request.

## **Review and Comments**

To provide McHenry County residents with the maximum opportunity to comment on the CAPER, Citizen Participation Plan, Action Plan, Consolidated Plan, and any Substantial Amendment. The County will provide the following Public comments periods:

- Citizen may comment on the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report at least fifteen (15) days from the Public notice
- Citizens may comment on the Consolidated Plan and Action Plan for at least thirty (30) days after the publication date of the draft plan.
- Citizen may comment on the Citizen Participation Plan for at least thirty (30) days after the publication date for the draft document.
- Citizen may comment on any Substantial Amendments to the Consolidated Plan and Action Plan for at least thirty (30) days after the publication date for the draft document.

The following are appropriate ways to provide public comment on any public noticed document:

- Written comments may be submitted in person to the Division of Community Development, 667 Ware Road, Room 207B, Woodstock, IL 60098
- Write to McHenry County Planning and Development, CD Division-Rm. 207B, 2200 N. Seminary, Woodstock, IL 60098
- Attend the Public Hearings and meetings described above. Each agenda provides time for public comment. The participation of all citizens, including minorities and persons with disabilities are particularly encouraged to provide public comments. Translation services, if required, must be requested in advance for scheduling purposes. Persons with limited English proficiency may also provide a translator of their choice. Translation or interpretation is subject to availability of web-based software or staff through McHenry County Court Services. McHenry County Planning and Development, Community Development Division will request services upon five (5) business days advanced notice.

## **Public Meeting and Hearing**

All Public Meetings and Hearing will be held at the McHenry County Government Administration Building located at 667 Ware Road, Woodstock, IL 60098. The Government Administration Building is both in handicapped accessible for individuals with disabilities and is in close proximity of public transportation.

The following HUD documents will be provided a Public Hearing to encourage citizen feedback: the CAPER, Citizen Participation Plan, Action Plan, Consolidated Plan, and any Substantial Amendment.

Translators, subject to availability through Court Services, will be provided for individuals that are hearing impaired and/or who have limited to no English language proficiency when requests are made at least five (5) business days prior to a meeting or hearing. Persons wishing to provide their own translator or interpreter may do so with no notification prior to a meeting or hearing.

Every effort will be made to schedule public meetings and hearings at a time that is convenient to citizens. Per federal regulations, public hearing will be held only after there has been a two (2) week's notice stating the time, date, and location of the public meeting or hearing. Current agenda's will be posted on the McHenry County Website forty-eight (48) hours in advance to any public meeting or hearing. All public meeting will have minutes composed and made available both by request and the County Website.

### **Complaint Procedures**

Complaints regarding any McHenry County HUD program will be addressed by the McHenry County Department of Planning and Development, Community Development Division staff in a timely and responsive manner. Staff will provide a written response with fifteen (15) business days of the complaint. Complaints may be submitted in the methods described in the Review and Comments section above.

### **Technical Support**

The McHenry County Planning and Development, Community Development Division will work with organizations and municipalities that support low and moderate-income people who are interested in submitting a proposal to obtain funding for a project. All potential applicants for funding are encouraged to contact the McHenry County Planning and Development Department, Community Development Division for information regarding both CDBG and HOME applications, and any additional future HUD grant funding the Department administers and/ or technical support of any grant application where the Department has the means and information to do so.